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Please add the following new claims:

- (New) 9. The method of claim 3, wherein at least 0.2 to 2.0 of the 3 hydroxymethyl(ene) groups of the fructan on which the fructan polycarboxylic acid is based have been converted into a carboxyl group.
10. The method of claim 3, where in at least 0.3 to 2.0 of the 3 hydroxyl groups has been converted into a carboxy-alkoxy or carboxy-acyloxy group. --.

REMARKS

This amendment is being submitted to remove all multiple dependent claims which were presented during the international phase of the PCT for this application. It is specifically noted that the claims upon which the International Preliminary Examination Report is based are amended and not the claims of the published PCT application. Applicants do not wish to present the multiple dependent claims during the United States national phase. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been entered and that the present application is in all respects complete and in condition for favorable consideration. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the amendments presented herein, it is requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned at the telephone number shown below.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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